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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **FORMER GANG LEADER JELANI LEE SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT**

### **First Sentence Of Lancaster County Defendant Under “222 Corridor” Anti-Gang Initiative**

PHILADELPHIA – United States Attorney Pat Meehan and Lancaster County District Attorney Donald R. Totaro announced today that on January 29, 2007, United States District Judge Lawrence F. Stengel sentenced defendant JELANI LEE to a term of life imprisonment without parole. Lee was found guilty by a jury in June 2006 of possession with intent to distribute approximately 250 grams of crack.

This is the first sentence of a Lancaster County defendant under the new “222 Corridor” Anti-Gang Initiative, a joint initiative of the United States Attorney’s Office, the Lancaster County District Attorney's Office, the Lancaster City Police Department, and other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies throughout the “222 Corridor” which stretches from Easton to Harrisburg. This region is one of six sites nationwide to receive a \$6 million grant to target and prosecute gang members and to bring them into federal court, where the defendants are likely to receive a substantial sentence upon conviction.

This conviction arose out of an investigation of Jelani Lee for possession of substantial quantities of crack in the city of Lancaster. Lee and two other men were arrested following a car stop on January 7, 2005, in Lancaster. After pulling the rented vehicle over for several motor vehicle violations, the police learned that Lee's driver's license was suspended, and the vehicle was not permitted to be operated in Pennsylvania. Crack cocaine was subsequently discovered inside the car, and all three men were arrested. After two keys from the Red Carpet Inn Motel were recovered from Jelani Lee's pocket, the police executed a search warrant there, recovering 200.7 grams of crack cocaine, \$2,000 in cash, a digital scale, and packaging materials. Lee operated a crew of drug dealers, known as the Jelani Lee Gang, that he had recruited in New York City and brought to Lancaster to sell crack cocaine. Lee has been identified as one of the major crack cocaine traffickers in the Lancaster County area.

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Because of his prior criminal record, which included a three felony narcotics convictions, and a number of other convictions in New York, under federal law he was a “career offender” requiring the imposition of a mandatory sentence of life imprisonment without parole. Lee’s involvement with the criminal justice system began when he was 14 and included juvenile adjudications for robbery, unauthorized use of an automobile, and criminal sale of a controlled substance. His adult criminal record also included convictions for criminal trespass, hindering apprehension and providing false reports to law enforcement authorities, as well as numerous violations of probation.

“A life sentence is appropriate in this case, especially when you consider Lee’s lifetime disregard for the laws of our society,” said Meehan. “Violent gang members and drug dealers are beginning to get the message that the consequences associated with being prosecuted federally under this 222 initiative are beyond anything they might have imagined.”

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